

REMARKS

Claims 3, 13, 15, 16, 21, 23, 25 and 26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 3 and 21 are amended. No new matter is added by the above amendments. In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 3, 15, 16, 21, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,796,951 to Hamner in view of the Minasi publication, the Person publication, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0052995 to IDEHARA, and Patent No. 5,940,391 to Melkin et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of references fail to disclose or suggest all of the features recited in independent claims 3 and 21. The Examiner alleges that Hamner discloses a device retrieving apparatus that retrieves a device among a plurality of devices present on a network comprising: a display unit having a screen, an input that is used to externally input an instruction, and an application/control unit that causes individual symbols corresponding to individuals and device symbols corresponding to devices to be displayed on the screen of said display unit. However, Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner has misinterpreted the Hamner reference. In particular, Hamner fails to disclose an application/control unit that causes individual symbols corresponding to individuals and device symbols corresponding to devices to be displayed on the screen of said display unit. Rather, Hamner only discloses a hierarchical tree showing device groups comprising devices, and tasks associated with a particular device. See, for example, column 4, lines 1-28. Applicants submit that the Examiner has improperly interpreted the devices shown in Hamner window 201 as individual symbols corresponding to individuals.

Although Applicants disagree with the Examiner's rejection, Applicants have amended independent claims 3 and 21 in order to place the application in better condition for allowance. Based on the Examiner's comments on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, independent claims 3 and 21 are amended to further define "individual symbols." Claims 3 and 21 have been amended to recite "an application/control unit that causes individual symbols comprising photographs, illustrations, or personal names corresponding to individuals, and device symbols corresponding to devices to be displayed on the screen of said display unit."

Applicants respectfully submit that Hamner fails to disclose the features in amended independent claims 3 and 21. Applicants also submit that the other cited art fails to remedy these deficiencies of Hamner. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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